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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/808,576	03/25/2004	Yukifumi Yamada	000409-103	5527

21839 7590 06/08/2006

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EXAMINER

WHITE, RODNEY BARNETT

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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3636

DATE MAILED: 06/08/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.		Applicant(s)	
	10/808,576		YAMADA, YUKIFUMI	
	Examiner		Art Unit	
	Rodney B. White		3636	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 21 October 2005.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-3 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-3 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

Claims 1-3 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

In claim 1, line 8, the phrase "a connecting mechanism" is unclear and confusing language. The determinant "a" suggests a single item. However, the word "mechanisms" following it is plural. On lines 14-15, the phrase "engaged each other" is unclear and confusing language. Should a word such as "with" follow the word "engaged"? On line 19, the phrase "disengaged each other" is unclear and confusing language. Should a word such as "from" follow the word "disengaged"?

In claim 2, line 4, - - the - - should be inserted in front of "convex", since it has been defined earlier in the claim. If it is a different "convex portion", then - - a - - should be placed in front of it. On line 6, should - - a - - be inserted in front of "predetermined"?

In claim 3, lines 4-5, the phrase "any engagements is the link parts is disengaged each other" is unclear and confusing language. Should the word "is" after

"engagement" be - - in - - instead of - - is - -? Also, should a word such as "from" follow the word "disengaged"?

The aforementioned problems render the claims vague and indefinite. Clarification and/or correction is required. Also, Applicant needs to read through the specification and the claims to fix any grammatical or typographical errors that the Examiner may have missed.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

(e) the invention was described in a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention thereof by the applicant for patent, or on an international application by another who has fulfilled the requirements of paragraphs (1), (2), and (4) of section 371(c) of this title before the invention thereof by the applicant for patent.

The changes made to 35 U.S.C. 102(e) by the American Inventors Protection Act of 1999 (AIPA) and the Intellectual Property and High Technology Technical Amendments Act of 2002 do not apply when the reference is a U.S. patent resulting directly or indirectly from an international application filed before November 29, 2000. Therefore, the prior art date of the reference is determined under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) prior to the amendment by the AIPA (pre-AIPA 35 U.S.C. 102(e)).

Claims 1-2, so far as understood, are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Moriyama et al (U.S. Patent No. 6,669,296 B2).

Moriyama et al teach a seat reclining device in which a seat belt is fixed to a seat back at one side comprising: a pair of upper arms mounted on the seat backs; a pair of lower arms fixed to seat cushion at both sides so as to be rotatable relative to the upper arms; a pair of locking mechanisms restricting a rotation of the upper arms relative to the upper arms; a connecting mechanisms unlocking both locking mechanisms; an operation handle provided at one locking mechanism; the other locking mechanism is unlocked in response to operation of the operation handle through the connecting mechanism, under the condition that the operation handle is operated so that one locking mechanism can be unlocked, one locking mechanism, the operation handle, the connecting mechanism and the other locking mechanism can be engaged each other and operate together, under the condition that the one seat back fixed to the seat belt is more deformed by tension of the seat belt than the other side of the seat back, any engagement among the one locking mechanism, the operation handle, the connecting mechanism and the other locking mechanism is disengaged each other so that the one locking mechanism cannot operate together with the other locking mechanism (See Abstract and specification), wherein a shaft 70 included in the locking mechanisms is provided with a convex portion 71 and a groove portion (see Fig. 1) is provided at the connecting mechanism where the shaft is inserted, or convex portion 42a is provided at the connecting mechanism where the shaft is inserted and the shaft included in the locking mechanism is provided with the groove portion so that

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predetermined interspace can be set between the convex portion and the groove portion.

Claim 3 would be allowable if rewritten to overcome the rejection(s) under 35 U.S.C. 112, 2nd paragraph, set forth in this Office action and to include all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. Higushi et al, Schmale, Boisset, Glance, Griswold et al, Hewko et al, Halse et al, Urrutia, Schultz et al, Aufrere et al, Husted et al, Viano et al, Barrere et al, and Aumont et al teach structures and concepts similar to the present invention.

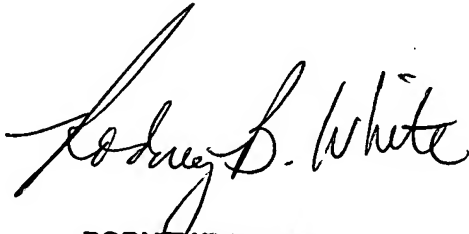
Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Rodney B. White whose telephone number is (571) 272-6863. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Peter Cuomo can be reached on (571) 272-6856. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

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Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

Rodney B. White,
Patent Examiner
Art Unit 3636
June 6, 2006



RODNEY B. WHITE
PRIMARY EXAMINER